save time, admit it. With regard to the second, I must say it is an argument which tells both ways. If it leads to increased business that an architect should get his work done cheaply, it surely follows that it would increase it that he should also *do* his own at a lesser rate. Away then go all barriers against the competitive principle, and the man who is willing to sacrifice time, talent, and education for 2½ per cent. may carry the day. This you will not admit, but for time, talent, and education, read attention, capital, and experience, and the case is the builders. The evil is that superiority of work goes for nothing in this merely monetary calculation. If an architect should be well paid for a costly education which he may have received, for a genius which adorns that which he designs, or an intelligence which develops the greatest possible amount of accommodation, a builder should be well paid for the fortune he risks in the enterprise, for the experience which enables him to choose the best materials, and for the ability which he displays in gathering around him the most skilled workmen. It is a mistake to imagine that there is not an equal difference between different builders as between different architects. And yet architects think they have acted quite fairly when they only admit of competition amongst builders of equal standing. But what does this amount to? Why, that supposing they are all on equal terms, their work is as well done, their business of equal extent, their facilities the same. You have one of three things,—either the one who makes the greatest mistake gets the work, or the one who proposes most largely to evade the specification; or, lastly, the one who agrees to take a less profit. But all these are unfair. Given the same powers, and the same results should ensue. The first would be founded on an injustice; the second would be unfair to the employer; the third unfair to the builder.

Architects should surely know what is a fair price for a work. It will not do to say that this is not their business. Unfortunately, in practice, the Pegasus of art is inevitably yoked with the ox of trade; and as the architect must be able to value the variations in his work, he might, with little further trouble, be able to value the whole; and, having decided upon the *quality* of his work, let him go where he has confidence, and pay a fair price for it. He does not send to Houbigant and Piver for rival estimates for his gloves, to Schultz and May for his coats, nor Lehocq and Medwin for his boots,—why should he send to—well, I will not mention names—for tenders for his house?

I am not a builder crying for monopoly and high prices, be it understood, but one who, seeing the daily *decadence* of the quality of builders and building, would do what little I could to urge on architects the necessity, if they value present respect and future fame, to look that their works be *well* rather than *cheaply* executed, and to pay a fair price for what is fairly earned. It is true that your readers would lose a little of their amusement in the matter of the feats of the "Blind Builders," concerning whom, by the way, I have, on some other occasion, another bone to pick with the architects, should the present find a place in your columns. B. H.

THE CONDITION OF ARCHITECTURE.

No one can deny that the tone adopted by your correspondent Q. E. D. regarding the system of "free trade" in architectural criticism, is quite correct, and if it were followed out with integrity, and in the true spirit of *impartial* liberality, in giving judicious praise where undoubted and intrinsic talent was really manifested, and condemning everything that is mediocre in architectural design, that important and beneficial results would eventually be arrived at, and the time might come when the base and degrading system of copyism would be driven out of the pale of architectural practice.

That the science of architecture for the last thirty years in England has been in the very depths of its degradation I think no one who has paid much attention to the subject will deny; for we have had the most direct plagiarisms perpetrated, and corruption upon corruption, and puerility upon puerility, repeated over and over again, so that the sight is quite palled by the examination of the foul abominations, some of which really embody the very incarnation of all that is ugly and contemptible.

Allow me to illustrate two specimens as to the extent to which the system of copyism is carried. First, Leo von Klenze, of Munich, asserted a few years ago that *Greek* architecture would soon become not only the architecture of Europe, but of the world, and it was the only style worthy of being followed. In opposition to this, Augustus Welby Pugin told us that *Gothic*, or *Christian*, architecture (as he called it) was the only true manner of building, and that we must be "content to follow" (not to lead) in the footsteps of the ecclesiastic architects of the middle ages. These rhapsodies of the eminent German and our own talented countryman are in themselves so fallacious and ridiculous that I shall not waste time or paper in their refutation; but is it not lamentable to know, at the present time, that men of high standing in the art continue the perverse system of self-abasement in persisting to copy what has been so frequently repeated over and over again? It is also truly lamentable to know that since the time of Wren and Vanbrugh we have had no architect in England who can safely lay claim to anything like originality or dignity of conception in architectural art.

A glance at what has latterly been done in architecture will bring us to the humiliating conclusion that this noble and dignified art has been most wofully libelled in England during the last half-century. Is there no coming man amongst us who has the hardihood and genius to throw boldly off the degrading trammels, and, like the great Brunelleschi, and the men of the middle ages, produce buildings that would do honour to our national character, instead of pursuing the paths of mere tyros in the art, in producing servile and soulless copies of forms that have existed for hundreds and thousands of years? Roberto Angelo.

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL.

The restoration of this venerable cathedral is still progressing. The nave now presents, with the Purbeck marble pillars and string courses restored to their original form and colour, and the walls cleaned, a finished and beautiful appearance. The same work of renovation is now commenced in one of the side aisles. During the present summer, the roof of the south transept, which, in some former age, had been lowered, so as to be nearly flat, has been raised to its original pitch, and produces a fine effect in a distant view of the cathedral. The number of painted windows, of which there were none twelve years ago, is now twelve. There have been two erected within the last few days, viz. a small one, of Early English character, in the north aisle, the work of Mr. Wailes, of Newcastle: this was presented by Lady Georgina Bathurst, as a memorial of the late Lady Louisa Mary Lennox: the designs are an illustration of the passage, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness;" above which is the Crucifixion, with a foliated cross; and the whole is surrounded by a border of passion-flowers. The other is a two-light window, also Early English, in the south aisle, and was given by the canon at present in residence, the Rev. C. Pilkington, and is a memorial of his father and mother. The window was painted by Hardman, of Birmingham. The designs represent four of the principal events in the life of St. Paul,—"The Conversion," "Preaching at Athens," "Bound before Agrippa," and "The Martyrdom." These are surrounded with scroll and flower-work.

Proposed Surrey Archæological Society.—An Archæological Society for the county of Surrey is being formed: the committee are now receiving the names of gentlemen desirous of joining it.

DORCHESTER HOUSE, PARK-LANE.

Every metropolitan journeyer must have noticed, in Park-lane, a mansion of more than ordinary size and pretensions, which has been steadily growing up for a long time past to external completion. This is for the residence of R. S. Holford, esq.; it has been built from the designs of Mr. Lewis Vulliamy, architect, and we here give a perspective view of the structure from the south-west. It is faced with Portland stone, from the Wayecroft and Maggot quarries. The works are being executed by Messrs. W. Cubitt and Co. with the exception of the carving, which is by Mr. C. H. Smith, to whom was entrusted the approval of the stone.

The plan of the house is a parallelogram, 104 ft. 9 in. wide (east to west), and 135 ft. 6 in. deep. The *principal story* will comprise a reception-room, 34 ft. by 31 ft.; drawing-room, 42 ft. by 27 ft.; saloon, 55 ft. by 29 ft.; boudoir, 28 ft. by 18 ft.; second drawing-room, 28 ft. by 18 ft.; and, dining-room, 44 ft. by 25 ft. On the *ground story* there will be—two libraries, one 40 ft. by 28 ft.; the other, 42 ft. by 28 ft.; a study, 26 ft. by 22 ft.; and a private room, 28 ft. by 20 ft.

If we may judge from the proposed arrangement of the grand staircase, which is to be of marble, the interior will be fitted up with a view to great completeness; but as yet nothing has been done.

The arrangement of the west front (next Park-lane), is original and effective. The mouldings and dressings generally, have been very carefully studied. The principal cornice displays a large amount of carving: its size may be judged of from the fact that the stones composing the chief projection of it are each 8ft. 6 in. square. The masks in the frieze are scarcely so effective as they might be, and should have a little mind knocked into them before the scaffold be taken down. There will be a bold stone screen wall round the house, with a lodge at the south-east corner.

We must add that this mansion is a very good specimen of masonry, and is built for long endurance. The external walls are 3 ft. 10 in. thick, with a cavity of about 5 in.: the proportion of stone is great, and the bonders numerous: the stones are all dowelled together, with slate dowels, and throughout the greatest care appears to have been taken by the architect to ensure more than usually sound construction. If the New Zealander, who is to gaze on the deserted site of fallen London in some distant time to come, see nothing else standing in this neighbourhood, he will certainly find the weather-tinted walls of Dorchester-house, erect and faithful; and will perhaps strive to discover the meaning of the monogram which appears on the shields beneath the balconies, "R. S. H," that he may communicate his speculations to some "Tasmanian Society of Antiquaries," perhaps not more pugnacious, if less erudite, than our own!

The Reaping-machine.—I am very much gratified to find by your notice that justice is at length being done to my old school-fellow Mr. Bell, in respect to his reaping-machine and his undoubted claim as the original inventor. When I visited the Exhibition last year I saw at once that the American claim was nothing but a revival of the machine I had seen at work on the farm of the Leigh nearly twenty years ago. Mr. Bell is the son of a farmer, and possesses great mechanical and inventive faculties. He produced his reaping-machine when studying divinity at St. Andrew's. He is a native of the parish of Lealing, about six miles north-west of Dundee. An engraving of his invention will be found in a Cyclopædia published by Fullerton and Co. of Glasgow, I think partly translated from the German, "Conversations Lexicon." After Mr. Bell was a preacher and teacher it was common when one asked another, "Weel, wha had you preaching yesterday at your kirk?"—that, "Oh, the shearing-machine" would be the answer, meaning Mr. Bell, for he was popularly known in the district by that name, the good people thinking a minister had no business to intermeddle in such affairs.—An Admirer.

To learn how to use OCR and PDF Compression go to our website